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PMA MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT bulletin

No. 10

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
PMA CENTRAL EMPLOYEE AWARDS COMMITTEE
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

July 26, 1950

1950 HONOR AWARDS TO PMA EMPLOYEES

At the Fourth Honor Awards Ceremony held in Washington on May 25 the Department gave honor and recognition to the following PMA employees who earned high distinction for rendering exceptional service. They received the Department's second highest honor--the Superior Service Award.

LENOR M. BENIK, OFFICE OF BUDGET, WASHINGTON, D. C. *For exemplary competence and unusually meritorious service in performing and organizing work, both within and outside the scope of her duties, in such a manner as to increase materially the effectiveness and economy with which the work of the division in which she was employed is performed.*

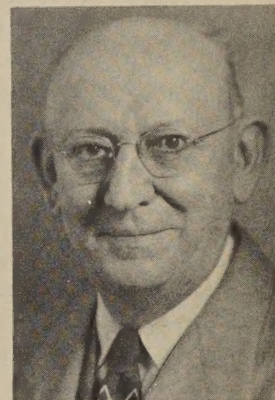


Miss Lenor M. Benik has the distinction of being one of the few clerk-stenographers to receive the superior service award from the Department of Agriculture. She began work for the Department as a CAF-2 clerk-stenographer for the Agricultural Adjustment Administration in August 1933. After nine years with AAA, she was transferred to the Secretary's office where she was a clerk on investigations work. She is now secretary to Robert P. Beach who recently was named Chief of the Office of Budget for the PMA. Prior to this appointment, Miss Benik served as Mr. Beach's secretary while he was Chief of the Financial Analysis Division of the Fiscal Branch.

Miss Benik was born in Baltimore, Maryland, and completed her public schooling there. Miss Benik was employed

by commercial firms in Baltimore as clerk and stenographer for ten years prior to coming with the Department. She was awarded a Bachelor of Laws degree from National University in Washington in 1940.

ROBERT BIER, FRUIT AND VEGETABLE BRANCH, WASHINGTON, D. C. *For his exceptional administrative ability and unusually effective leadership in the handling of program operations, superb management of employees under emergency conditions; and for his constructive contributions to the standardization and inspection service in the orderly marketing of peanuts which resulted in substantial benefits to the industry and to the Government.*

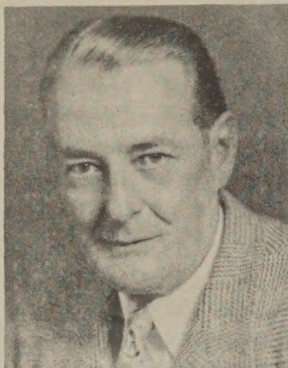


Robert Bier started employment with the Department as an assistant truck crop specialist for the Bureau of Crop Estimates March 15, 1919, at New Orleans, La. He came to Washington with that agency in 1920 and has advanced in a series of steps to his present position as Assistant Chief of Fresh Products Standardization and Inspection Division in PMA's Fruit and Vegetable Branch.

Mr. Bier was born at Sunbury, Pa., October 26, 1888. After completing his elementary and high school training in Pennsylvania, he was graduated in horticulture from Pennsylvania State College in 1913 and took post-graduate work in Cornell University at Ithaca, New York. He taught botany and horticulture at New York State School of Agriculture from 1913 to 1917 and was extension special-

ist in vegetable gardening at Cornell University in 1918 and 1919, except for four months of military service as a second lieutenant in the Army Quartermaster Corps during World War I.

MICHAEL T. COOGAN, FRUIT AND VEGETABLE BRANCH, LOS ANGELES, CALIF. *For effective and efficient administration of marketing agreements, including surplus removal and export subsidy programs, in the face of overwhelming obstacles; and for his unusual analytical ability in appraising the economic and organizational problems involved in the handling of exceedingly complex and difficult marketing operations.*



Michael T. Coogan, who is now market-specialist in charge of the Fruit and Vegetable Branch Marketing Field Office for the PMA in Los Angeles, started work with the Department as a Junior Fiscal Accountant in the Fruit and Vegetable Division in Los Angeles on May 1, 1934. He advanced through various marketing agencies of the Department as accountant and marketing specialist. During World War II, he represented the War Food Administration on the Area Production Urgency Committee and the War Manpower Priorities Committee in the southern California area.

Mr. Coogan was born in Chicago June 15, 1891. He completed public school and business college training there and worked as an auditor, public accountant, and salesman for several business firms in the Midwest and West from 1912 to 1934.

MARGARET M. SINKULA, FISCAL BRANCH, WASHINGTON, D. C. *For reconstructing vital accounts and accounting records on certain appropriations which were practically useless for reporting to General Accounting Office.*

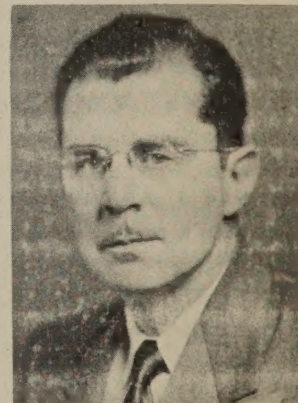


Miss Margaret M. Sinkula, who is a fiscal accountant in the Fiscal Control Division of Production and Marketing Administration's Fiscal Branch,

started her Government employment with the Federal Emergency Relief Administration in North Dakota in 1934. She worked as accounting clerk and bookkeeping machine operator for State Accounts Offices of the U. S. Treasury Department in North Dakota and Nebraska from 1936 to 1941. After working for the Treasury Department, Bureau of Accounts, and the Office for Emergency Management in Cleveland, Ohio, and Washington, D. C., she joined the Department of Agriculture in March 1946 as a constructive accountant in Production and Marketing Administration's Fiscal Branch.

Miss Sinkula was born at Fairchild, Wisconsin, and received her public school training in North Dakota. While teaching elementary school during regular terms, she attended summer school at North Dakota State Teachers College, Dickinson, North Dakota, and was graduated in 1933.

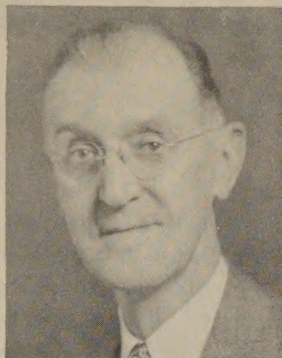
WALTER A. STROUD, FISCAL BRANCH, WASHINGTON, D. C. *For exceptional service to the Department in advising and counseling with reference to the fiscal aspects of transportation activities of agricultural commodities.*



Walter A. Stroud has been assistant chief of the Claims Division in Production and Marketing Administration's Fiscal Branch since November 20, 1946. He started his Government career as an audit clerk in the Federal Surplus Relief Corporation of the Department in October 1934, and has progressed through the various successor marketing agencies as audit clerk, accountant, and claims examiner.

Mr. Stroud was born at Clarendon, Pa., on October 7, 1905, and moved to Oklahoma during his early youth. He was graduated from the Cleveland, Oklahoma, high school and attended Benjamin Franklin University in Washington two years, since he came with the Department. He was employed by oil well supply and oil companies in Oklahoma as a clerk and salesman from 1924 to 1934.

WILLIAM L. EVANS, FRUIT AND VEGETABLE BRANCH, WASHINGTON, D. C. For meritorious authorship in devising and compiling a digest of Department rulings in over 3,500 controversies under the Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act, indispensable in insuring consistent interpretations of the Act and of the regulations.



William L. Evans has been with the Department of Agriculture 35 years, having started as head clerk in the Fruit and Vegetable Division of the Office of Markets in 1915. He helped to open the first fruit and vegetable market news offices, and was in charge of collecting and distributing excess wool profits under regulations of the War Industries Board following World War I. He is now a marketing specialist with the Regulatory Division of Production and Marketing Administration's Fruit and Vegetable Branch.

Mr. Evans was born March 21, 1886, at Lee Center, N. Y., where he grew up on a farm and attended public schools. In 1908 he came to work for the War Department where he handled applications for appointment of cadets to U. S. Military Academy. Since joining the Department, he has been awarded LLB and LLM degrees from the National University Law School and is a member of the bar in the District of Columbia.

DRIVE SUCCESSFUL...

Because of the success of the suggestion campaign put on by the Southeast Area in December, the other 4 PMA areas conducted a similar drive in April. As a result employees submitted 168 management improvement suggestions. Adding the 52 suggestions received from Southeast Area employees during December, that's a grand total of 220 ideas from field employees in one month--or 1 suggestion for each 43 employees.

Figures from 122 concerns reporting on suggestions received in 1949 indicate an average of 1 suggestion for each 5 employees for the year. By months the figure would be 1 for each 60 employees--Looks like PMA beat the average during this campaign--But there are twelve months in a year--keep it up!

Results by areas are as follows: Northeast Area - 1 suggestion for each 50 employees; Southeast - 1 suggestion for each 29 employees; Midwest Area - 1 suggestion for each 42 employees; Southwest Area - 1 suggestion for each 41 employees; Western Area - 1 suggestion for each 90 employees. Congratulations to You All in the Southeast!

SUPERVISOR'S HONOR ROLL

The submission of a suggestion that earns an award from any group signifies that the supervisor of that group is displaying the kind of leadership that promotes constructive thinking.

The following are supervisors whose employees' recent awards are covered in this issue.

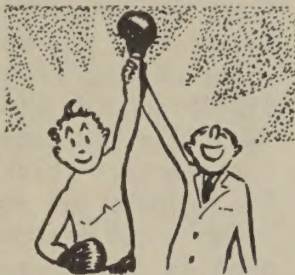


- H. A. Reynolds, Area Management Office, Atlanta (for Evelyn R. Mitchell)
- J. J. Normile, PMA Commodity Office, Chicago (for Milton B. Brown)
- X. F. Halm, PMA Commodity Office, Chicago (for Donald J. Porter)
- O. L. Bauer, PMA Commodity Office, Kansas City (for Helen H. Mehrwin)
- Richard H. Roberts, Livestock Branch, Washington (for Evelyn L. Lyle)
- R. D. Conklin, Livestock Branch, Washington (for Howell J. Starr)
- W. R. Branch, Livestock Branch, Omaha (for G. Wallace Templeton)
- Charles E. Wylie, Office of Administrative Services Washington (for Mildred L. Harris)
- Helen H. Mehrwin, PMA Commodity Office, Kansas City (for Maurice J. Lunch)
- Oscar F. Beyer, Food Distribution Programs Branch, Chicago (for John P. Janus)
- Ralph H. Fortune, PMA Commodity Office, San Francisco (for Tokiko A. Kawaguchi)
- Harry Larson, Livestock Branch, Thomasville, Ga. (for Laurie A. Hancock)
- F. R. Stutzman, Fiscal Branch, Washington (for Curtin W. Peck)
- G. A. Ortlip, Fiscal Branch, Washington (for Elmer C. House)

THE SUPERVISOR'S ROLE IN THE INCENTIVE AND AWARDS PROGRAM--DISCUSS IT AT YOUR NEXT STAFF MEETING!



CASH AWARDS - The following suggesters saving the Government \$5,750 per year have received awards of \$250 for their ideas. If any of the plans can be adapted to your work, please notify the PMA Central Employee Awards Committee, Washington, D.C. Let's give the suggester full credit and consideration for his idea!



Write the Central Committee for additional information on any suggestion.

ELIMINATES UNNECESSARY STEPS

MILTON B. BROWN, PMA COMMODITY OFFICE, CHICAGO - \$55. Proposed a better method of maintaining a manual unprocessed sub-account for Account 1401 "Loans Held by CCC". The new method eliminates several hundred postings which is substituted by a single debit and credit entry. The work which formerly took an average of 4 hours a day now only takes 1 hour. The proposed method also insures less reconciliation work in case of error. (How many steps do you go through in your operation? List them, and then ask yourself - is each step necessary, can any of the steps be combined, done easier some place else, or some other way?)

MILDRED HARRIS, OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES, WASHINGTON - \$35. Suggested a plan for eliminating steps in the clearance of PMA mailing list changes which was adopted by the Department Office of Information and Plant and Operations. A 15-day delay in processing a mailing list change has also been eliminated--and PMA has more than 6,000 mailing list changes a year. (Check all the steps of your job. Why is each step being performed? Is each step necessary?)

GET OUT OF THE BLEAC MAYBE Y

SIMPLIFIES OPERATION

DONALD J. PORTER, PMA COMMODITY OFFICE, CHICAGO - \$10. Developed a code and its application to certain "Header" and "Summary" IBM punch cards which permitted mechanical insertion of the cards in place of the former manual method employed. The operation which took 6 hours a month to do before the new method now takes only 1 hour a month -- a saving of 60 man hours a year. (Office machines are not always utilized to the maximum -- Is there some little job you're doing by hand that a machine can do easier, quicker, and with less chance of error?)

G. WALLACE TEMPLETON, LIVESTOCK BRANCH, OMAHA, NEBR. - \$25. In order to compute the average cost and weight of slaughter steers, numerous slips, as many as 800 a day had to be prepared and filled out with required information. The slips had to be sorted and totaled several times before the operation was completed. The suggester designed and recommended a form which eliminated the repetitious entries and sorting operations. - Results - 195 hours a year are saved in two field offices, the entire operation has been expedited and valuable employee time has been utilized on other important work (How are you accumulating your data? Are you using a lot of tally sheets? Is there a more simple way?)

ELIMINATES DUPLICATE INFORMATION

ELMER C. HOUSE, FISCAL BRANCH, WASHINGTON - \$50. Proposed eliminating the insertion of "Accounting Classification" information from "Examination Copy" of vouchers. This information was seldom if ever referred to and if needed could easily be obtained from the "Accounting Copy" or the "Posting Abstract". The average saving in time is 2 minutes per voucher, but 18,000 are processed in a year -- Result - 600 man hours a year saved. (Is there more than one place or record where the same information can be obtained? Is it necessary to maintain the same data in more than one place?)

TEACHERS AND INTO THE GAME... MAYBE YOU CAN HIT A HOME RUN!

SIMPLIFIES SORTING

CURTIS W. PECK, FISCAL BRANCH, WASHINGTON - \$15. Employee proposed use of a mechanical sorting device to simplify the sorting previously performed entirely by hand. Four individual sorts had to be made in order to place documents in alphabetical order by city within branch and in numerical sequence. The mechanical device, called a "Multisort" enabled the entire operation to be performed in one sorting. 94 man hours per year of sorting time is saved. More important, the use of the mechanical device decreases the possibility of error and increases the availability of the material resulting in much more satisfactory service to the branches and the GAO. (Many operations can be improved and simplified by the use of a mechanical device, a guide, etc.)

INCREASES EFFICIENCY

EVELYN R. MITCHELL, ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DIVISION, AREA MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ATLANTA - \$10. Renewal Agreements (Form AD-515) and Notices of Renewals (Form AD-516) used in connection with leasing operations were prepared on paper so heavy that two typing operations were required in each case to get six or seven legible copies. The suggester proposed that the forms be printed on thinner but high-grade paper - Result - all seven required copies prepared in one typing are clearly legible. The volume of such transactions is not great, but 84 hours of typing are saved during a peak load period of the year. (Do you prepare forms? How many copies? Are they all legible? Are all the copies necessary?)

JOHN P. JANUS, FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAMS BRANCH, CHICAGO - \$15. The sequence of copies in Form FP-54 "Delivery Order" was different from the procedure on their use. The employee proposed a rearrangement of the copies in the form to conform to the sequence of use. This facilitated the removal of the bottom copy at each step in the procedure. Only 5 seconds are saved in the handling of each

delivery order, but because of the volume, a total of 535 hours a year are saved in PMA. (Are you handling a form in which the sequence of copies does not conform to the procedure for handling? Maybe the form or the procedure should be changed.)

COMBINES OPERATION

EVELYN L. LYLE, LIVESTOCK BRANCH, WASHINGTON - \$10. Instead of first preparing an original of all dockets and press releases and subsequently preparing the same material on a ditto stencil, the suggester proposed that they be typed simultaneously in one operation. This was accomplished by placing medium or light weight bond paper on top of the ditto carbon. If extra copies are desired, manifold copies and regular carbon copies are placed in back of the ditto carbon. The former method took 1 day typing time for each docket ($\frac{1}{2}$ day to prepare original and $\frac{1}{2}$ day to prepare ditto). Since both operations are now performed simultaneously, $\frac{1}{2}$ day is saved in typing each docket. (Do you have a task that must be performed twice? Are both operations necessary? Can they be combined into one operation?)

LAURIE A. HANCOCK, LIVESTOCK BRANCH, THOMASVILLE, GEORGIA - \$10. The employee's office prepared news reports and releases covering livestock market activities for Georgia, Florida, and Alabama, with separate headings for each state. The contents of such reports were the same. The only difference was in the heading. The employee suggested that a combined heading, giving credit to the cooperating agencies of the three States be used for all reports. The plan saved 111 man hours of clerical time, nearly 1,900 mimeograph stencils and 24 reams of paper a year. This proposal was instrumental in the branch's study for further improvement which may lead to the elimination of all stencil cutting for headings for such reports. (Are you using two different forms when one would

be more efficient? Are you doing things separately that could be done simultaneously?)

MAURICE J. LYNCH, PMA COMMODITY OFFICE, KANSAS CITY - \$10. Instead of preparing a separate set of Consignee Receipts (Form PMA-375) for each shipment of processed commodities to the same consignee, the employee proposed that one set of receipts could be made to include several origin points covering shipments to the same consignee on the same date. Instead of preparing as many as six receipts, one receipt with the proper data was all that was required to be typed. 90 man hours of typing time are saved a year with savings also in forms and envelopes. (Look carefully at duplicate operations. Does each have to be done separately? Can any of the operations be combined?)

MORE ECONOMY

HOWELL J. STARR, LIVESTOCK BRANCH, WASHINGTON - \$10. Since the cost of Duplimat plates (paper) for printing is considerably cheaper and quicker than metal plate printing, the employee suggested fuller use of paper plate printing. As a result there was a 16% increase in the use of the more economical plate. The Duplimat plate, however, has certain limitations. Its maximum size is 10" x 15", and only from 1,000 to 1,500 printings can be made. (Are you using a metal plate when a paper plate would serve the purpose?)

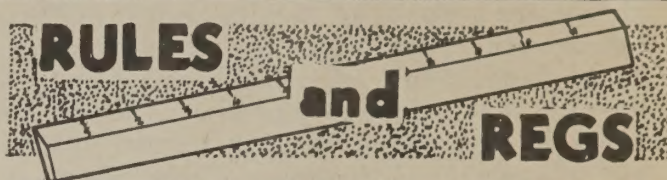
IMPROVES OPERATION

HELEN H. MEHRWIN, PMA COMMODITY OFFICE, KANSAS CITY - \$10. In ordering wheat out of elevators containing only wheat of high protein content and commitments require only ordinary wheat, the employee proposed use of a notation on the loading order making it optional with the warehouseman to substitute ordinary wheat. Considerable time and expense is saved by the plan. The substitution of ordinary wheat for high protein wheat can save PMA a few dollars or thousands of dollars on a single loading order. (Have you been using something that could be substituted by a less expensive product which would serve the purpose adequately?)

SIMPLIFIES PROCEDURE

TOKIKO A. KAWAGUCHI, PMA COMMODITY OFFICE, SAN FRANCISCO - \$10. Suggested a revision in the procedure and forms used

in the manifesting of railroad cars and the issuance of diversion notices. The new procedure and forms saves 585 man hours per year over the old method and eliminates the confusion of matching cars and their respective categories of commodity, grade factors, and holding points before diversions were made. (Study those procedures that seem complex and lengthy. There must be a better way of doing it.)



PMA Instruction 104.4, paragraph IV A on the Responsibility of Committees provides that each Committee (or special representative) is responsible for appraising the value of all suggestions which have been adopted or on which they authorize adoption in the Committee's area of jurisdiction and for recommending a cash (or other) award. Any adopted suggestion may be recommended for a cash award by either the field, branch or Central Committee. Estimated savings should be calculated by showing the costs for materials and manpower on the old and new methods. Calculation of savings should be attempted in the case of every adopted suggestion unless the benefits are intangible such as increase in morale, greater safety, improved public relations, etc., and cannot be measured.



SUPERVISOR'S MEETING

At a recent meeting of Grain Branch field officers held in Chicago, attention was given to the matter of improvement in management. The importance of submitting reports on all such improvements made was emphasized so that the widest application possible could be given to good ideas. The branch is conducting investigations on equipment, endeavoring to improve present grading equipment and devise new equipment and methods. Worthwhile suggestions in this connection are invited.

"FAMILY REUNION"

Fiscal Branch held a "get together" in the Jefferson Memorial Auditorium for the purpose of getting employees better acquainted with each other - to pay tribute to those who had distinguished themselves throughout the year - and to report on employee participation in management. 23 employees were presented with Length of Service Awards. Individual recognition was given to those who during the past year had earned cash awards for meritorious suggestions and awards for superior service to the Department --- 27 cash awards, 3 pay increases for meritorious service and 3 Superior Service Honor Awards. The Branch Director stated it was his intention that employees of the branch get together at least once a year in a similar manner and that it be held in the nature of an informal "family" reunion.

RENEWAL OF SUGGESTIONS

An employee asks what can be done

about a suggestion previously rejected which may now be acceptable because of changed conditions.

Note: If the suggester has new evidence that indicates the proposal is feasible or if he believes for other reasons that the suggestion merits reconsideration, he should resubmit his proposal through regular channels. He should refer to his original proposal and include all the new evidence available.

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ANONYMOUS SUGGESTIONS

An employee says he submitted a suggestion anonymously. "Is that all right?" **Note:** Usually it is not. If the suggestion refers to an isolated condition or problem in an unidentified unit, the Committee can not attempt to canvass all the many units in PMA in order to locate the particular situation. In any event, if the location is known, and the idea proves to be beneficial, the suggester cannot hope to gain recognition for it.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

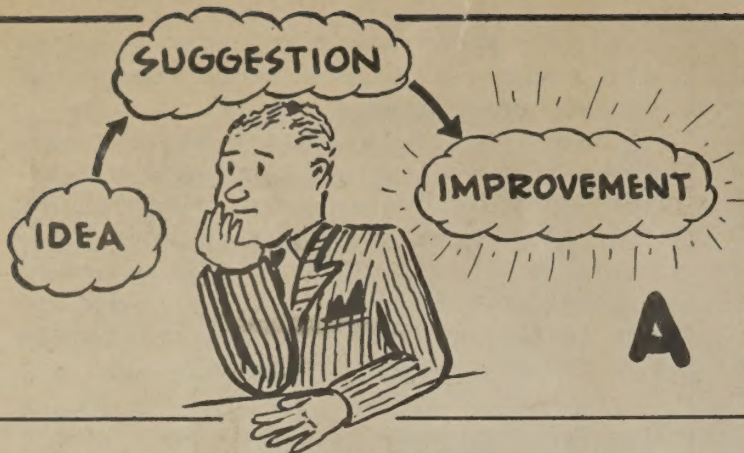
CLASSIFY AND IDENTIFY EXCEPTIONS FOR SPECIAL TREATMENT!

IS THE WORK PROPERLY DIVIDED?

Are you applying to All work a procedure which is required for only Part of the work?



In this example, cases in a unit went to an "eligibility" desk where they were checked against a list. By classifying and identifying the various Types of cases it was found that only new cases needed to go to the eligibility desk. Further study revealed that of the cases handled 88% were renewals and required no checking. The procedure was changed and only the 12% new cases were routed to the eligibility desk, reducing the volume of checking at that point by 88%.



DO YOU KNOW A BETTER WAY?

Write your suggestion here - and send it in. 53 PMA suggesters received \$2750 last year and saved the Government \$114,760. Show present method, proposed method and benefits or estimated savings.

Submitted by _____

(BRANCH OR OFFICE)

(LOCATION)

(DATE)